



Playing with Other People's Lives

Willie Horton

www.Gurdy.net

First of all, we all know what the title means – children's lives toyed with by teachers, children bullied in the schoolyard and employees bullied in the workplace. We're all aware of domestic violence, psychological violence in the home and the workplace and the manner in which Governments play with people's lives probably demands a whole article – or book – of its own. But that is not what this article is about.

If you are "normal" – and there's a 96% chance that you fall into this category – you are playing with the lives of others in a manner that is damaging both you and them and you're not even aware of it. The so-called normal person uses the tiniest fraction of their attention to attend to the reality of the here and now. In fact, our attention is subconsciously elsewhere – normally being entertained by the shadows of a past long gone. These are, indeed, shadows cast across our perception of everyday reality – influencing our view of ourselves, influencing our self-esteem, our self-confidence and influencing our perception of others – from nearest and dearest to our casual acquaintances. We operate in these shadows, constantly in reactive mode. The normal person never sees the light – only a reflection of the light masked and marred by these inner shadows.

As such, we misbehave rather than behave, we react rather than act. We see and interact with people who we think are there – not the actual people. Small throwaway remarks made to our children are the stuff of which their shadows, in their turn, will be made. We are, in this mindless reactive way, fashioning those who we claim to love to react, mindlessly, in their own way when they, in their turn, develop into normal adulthood. Through our mindlessness, we mindlessly toy with the lives of others.

You partner, husband, wife, boyfriend, girlfriend are, indeed, only a shadow of their former selves in your eyes because, once the novelty of new acquaintance, love and romance has worn off, once they become familiar to us, we categorize them, put them in their box and react to the people that we've gotten used to – the people that we think we know. The old saying that familiarity breeds contempt can be seen at work in the manner in which normal people treat people that they claim to love.

As normal people, it is not our fault that we behave in this manner. This mindless state is our default state of mind, it is the way we're built, the way that sustains us in our normal, mundane lives. But, whilst it may not be our fault, it is our responsibility. We have a responsibility, first and foremost to ourselves, and, then to those whose lives we touch, to stop misbehaving, to see ourselves as we really are and to see and interact with those around us in a mindful, caring manner. In seeing ourselves as we really are, we will see others for what they actually are too – we will drop our prejudices, our reactive behaviour, we will experience the novelty of each new moment and come to realize that nothing is familiar, for every new moment is unique.

To see ourselves as we really are, we have to step out of the shadows of our formative years – we have to step into the light. The shadows will neither go away nor diminish – we simply have to avoid giving them our attention. And, as you might be beginning to understand, seeing ourselves for who we really are and, then, seeing others in a similar light is all about paying attention – paying attention to the unique reality of the moment, one moment at a time. Not only does this free us from our own misconceived ideas, our own perceived inadequacies, not only does it enable us to see others in a different and real light, it enables us see the opportunities that abound in our lives. It enables us to see the light, rather than the dark, side of life.

Paying attention to each new moment, experiencing a first time every time, is achieved through a conscious decision on your part to turn your attention to what you are truly experiencing now – as distinct from what you think you are experiencing. This is done through the only interface that you have with the outside reality of the moment – your body and its five senses. In order to see the light you truly have to come to your senses. As normal adults we have become desensitized – we don't realize that our body is feeding us back a mass on data every moment – we don't notice the taste in our mouths, the feelings in our legs and arms. A client, having gone through a particularly bad patch in business and having started to pay attention all over again, told me one morning that he had heard the birds sing – but the birds sing every day, we just don't notice.

Noticing is the key to living life to the full. Experiencing the here and now is the key to creating effortless happiness and success. Paying attention to the reality of now is the key to abundant and wealthy living – in every sense of those words. You've got to free your mind to live the life that you've always been meant to live. In doing so, you will help the lives of others too.